



Ambassador Nicholson's nomination address
December 9, 2004.

A Clement J. Zablocki Veterans Affairs Medical Center publication, 5000 West National Avenue, Milwaukee, WI

Vol. 14, No. 1

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

Working for veterans

Ambassador R. James Nicholson was confirmed Wednesday, January 26 as Secretary of Veterans Affairs by voice vote in the Senate.

Just over six weeks earlier on December 9, President Bush introduced Ambassador Nicholson as his nominee for the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (see picture at top of page). "Jim Nicholson is a patriot, a man of deep conviction who has answered his country's call many times. As a young man from Iowa, raised in modest circumstances, he became a cadet at West Point in the late 1950s and went on to become an Army Ranger and paratrooper. As a Ranger, he fought in Vietnam, where he won multiple decorations for bravery in combat, including the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge. After eight years on active duty, he joined the Army Reserves, where he served for 22 more years before retiring as a full colonel."

"He was a respected chairman of the Republican National Committee," President Bush continued. "And for the past three years he has served as the United States Ambassador to the Vatican. Jim has worked with the Vatican to advance many vital foreign policy goals, including fighting poverty, hunger, AIDS, expanding religious liberty around the world and ending the brutal practice of human trafficking. I'm grateful to Jim for his superb work as our Ambassador, and I now have asked him to accept a new assignment, to serve his country and his fellow veterans."

During the ceremony in the Roosevelt Room of the White House, the President complimented Anthony J. Principi for his service as the previous Secretary of Veterans Affairs noting he "...has shown himself to be an outstanding executive, a friend to his fellow veterans, and a goodhearted man."

In accepting the nomination, Ambassador Nicholson said he was thankful for the opportunity to serve. "Our military is the pride of our country. We can't pay them enough to do the things that we ask of them – the sacrifices, the separations, the heroics. They answer the call for one reason: Their country needs them. Our country depends on them, and they have never,



Ambassador Jim Nicholson at the Senate confirmation hearing last week.

ever let us down. We must not let them down, either. President George Washington spoke of our obligations to the veterans of the Revolutionary War. 'As more of a common debt,' he said, 'it is a debt of honor.' I know you feel the same way, Mr. President. You have made the health and well-being of our veterans an important priority of your administration. I will proudly join you in keeping those commitments, should I be confirmed. I am eager for the work ahead, and I am grateful for the confidence."

Mr. Nicholson holds a master's degree in public policy from Columbia University in New York and a law degree from the University of Denver. He practiced law with a major Denver law firm and became a partner after two years.

In 2000, Mr. Nicholson was given the prestigious Horatio Alger Award, recognizing his climb from humble beginnings to a position of success, which has enabled him to serve others in America now less fortunate. Among community honors, Irish America magazine has named him one of the top 100 Irish Americans in the country. In August of 2001, Mr. Nicholson was sworn in as the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican.

Secretary Nicholson's first day in the cabinet level position at the Department of Veterans Affairs is anticipated to be later this week.

The Office of the Press Secretary and the Chicago VA Office of Public Affairs contributed to this article. Photo top of page by Eric Draper, White House Press Office.



The 6th Annual Salute to the African American Veteran is slated for 7 p.m. on Thursday (February 10) in room 3435 (B-312). Keynote speaker is Capt. Beverly Dandridge from the U.S. Public Health Service. This is a celebration of the unique contributions of African Americans in our military, from the Revolution to the present. This year, the focus is African American women in the military. The evening features music performed by the Great Lakes Ceremonial Band. This program is a combined effort of the staff of the clinical support and mental health divisions, employee education, recreation/creative arts therapy, American Legion Post 455 Fifth District and VA Black History Committee. All are invited.

Salute on Valentines Day. The staff of the Medical Center has invited local celebrities and members of the armed forces to visit and have lunch with patients on the day designated as the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans – Monday, February 14. Along with the many visits, thousands of Valentines from children throughout the area add cheer to the day. Popular television talk show host Montel Williams is this year's chair and is slated to visit veterans at a New York VA medical center. It is a day to encourage people to personally recognize veteran patients and look at the opportunities to volunteer. Those interested in volunteering are encouraged to call voluntary service at 414 384-2000, extension 41803. Denise Jashinsky is program coordinator.

Throughout 2005, the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in Madison will host a series of programs and exhibits dealing with America's longest conflict, the Vietnam War. Beginning January 17, the WVM will host "The Vietnam Experience," a collection of oil paintings from the Naval Historical Center in Washington D.C. featuring the work of various combat artists. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum is a free public educational activity of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs and is located at 30 W. Mifflin St., across from the State Capitol. The museum is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (year round). For more information contact Charlotte Deleste, at 608-264-7663, or <http://museum.dva.state.wi.us>

1,206 years of service Congratulations & thank you

Time and service are truly a benchmark of contentment. But, there is that time when you must move on. You are set free. It is not an easy step for many.

Those who have retired start a new life. They are finding another focus. Some have relocated to enjoy the warmth of the sun; some are working part-time doing something entirely different, and others are busy with activities that were put away for another day. New employees move in and maybe in time, some will opt to be on a similar list.

This is a list of those who have retired in 2004. It is with pleasure, and some envy, they are recognized with the wish of a healthy and wonderful retirement. They earned it.

Retiree	Division/Service	Years of Service
Mary R. Armstrong	Clinical Support	34
Kenneth W. Bray	Clinical Support	23
Dennis E. Burdick	Clinical Support	23
Eileen A. Cantwell	Human Resources Mgmt	36
Judith A. Chattin	Clinical Support	33
Evelyn Christiansen	Clinical Support	34
Marlene H. Cieslinski	Clinical Support	22
Dennis J. Czarnecki	Medical Information	12
Mary Ann L. Dawson	Medical Information	17
Pamella J. Eddington	Consultant Care	5
Ronald H. Falkner	Rehab. Ext & Comm Care	32
Orthwin E. Gallitz	Canteen	32
Gerald F. Gleiss	Facilities Management	32
Therese M. Gumowski	Consultant Care	26
James D. Henderson, Jr., DVM	Research	20
Judith K. Holford	Medical Information	37
Robert J. Huebner	Chief Information Office	22
Conrad V. Jackson	Facilities Management	10
Ronald Jenkins	Facilities Management	33
Robert W. Juopperi	Medical Information	20
John Just, MD	Consultant Care	5
Juanita Kirk	Consultant Care	24
Sandra L. Laedtke	Rehab. Ext & Comm Care	30
Richard P. Laperriere	Facilities Management	34
Gregory J. Lenser	Laboratory	30
Janet F. Matzur	Rehab. Ext & Comm Care	6
Terry L. Nicholson	Facilities Management	11
Michael P. Patsches	Laboratory	34
David A. Peckham	Clinical Support	7
Michael J. Rissky	Voluntary Service	34
Mary L. Ryan	Clinical Support	30
Patricia M. Ryan	Mental Health	31
Lawrence J. Schaff	Clinical Support	29
Curtis Schlauch	Facilities Management	30
Dale P. Schraml	Facilities Management	32
Wesley Smith	Mental Health	14
Barbara L. Somers	Medical Information	16
Lois L. Spankowski	Mental Health	13
Janet M. Strandt	Rehab. Ext & Comm Care	31
Dorothy J. Swanigan	Consultant Care	31
Dianne C. Volkoff	Primary Care	14
Frances L. Vosburg	Decision Support Service	37
Jerry L. Votaw	Facilities Management	31
Carla M. Waraksa	Rehab. Ext & Comm Care	12
Harley J. Warner	Medical Information	36
David E. Wisniewski	Prosthetics	15
Robert L. Zander	Facilities Management	9
January 2005 retirees		
Laverne I. Brant	Consultant Care	6
Frances V. Dordel	Great Lakes Acquisition Ctr	21
Katherine R. Przybyla	Fiscal	24

Remembering those who passed on		
Carla A. Broadnax	Consultant Care	23
Martin T. Castle	Primary Care	7
Bonnie Dougherty	Clinical Support	17
Melvin P. Markovina	Clinical Support	22
Dale G. Tompkins	Facilities Management	8

Information courtesy Kristine L. Kemnitz and Terry A. Bell, HRMS; formatting Kim Chapman.



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The community relations office publishes *5000 West* bi-weekly as a channel of communication for employees, volunteers, patients and friends. *5000 West* is committed to enhancing the image of the Medical Center and its employees and volunteers through information, recognition and entertainment.

Articles of interest are welcome. The editor reserves the right to use and edit contributed articles. Submission deadline is two days prior to publication. Your comments are encouraged and should be directed to editor (00Z) *5000 West*, VA Medical Center, Milwaukee, WI 53295; telephone (414) 382-5363 or (888) 469-6614, extension 45363 or john.zewiske@med.va.gov

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Today's circulation: 1,600